

Physics Department Incidents Log

Incident No. 2006 - 01

Date of Report: 1/4/2006

Reportable/Classification: Recordable – No DART

Date of Incident: 10/27/2005

Status ES&H Committee Final Report

Groups Involved: PHENIX

Lead Investigator: C. Woody

Description:

The PHENIX Group Administrative Secretary was sitting in her chair and rolled towards her desk when her left knee hit the metal filing drawer that is attached to the desk. This caused an extreme amount of pain in her knee that worsened overnight and the next day. At first she thought it was just bruised, but the pain continued to worsen with time. She also started to feel a grinding sensation inside the knee, and when she walked, the knee would occasionally lock up and she could not move it at all. She is still experiencing pain, popping and grinding in the knee, and cannot sit, stand or walk on it for long periods of time.

The employee is undergoing physical therapy for her knee. An ergonomic evaluation was performed by an IH subject matter expert. Temporary provisions have been made until the permanent solutions can be implemented.

Root Cause: Working Environment Less Than Adequate

The desk leg room under the desk is too narrow. The person sitting at the desk always has to sit at an angle when working on the computer. This desk was custom made for a previous, now retired, employee. The workspace was not reviewed when the current secretary moved to this office.

Contributing Causes:

None.

Corrective Actions (Group):

The desk will be changed to provide more leg room and better access for moving the chair in and out. The person sitting at the desk should then also be able to sit straight while working on the computer.

Corrective Actions (Department):

Group Safety Coordinators (GSCs) will be informed and there will be discussion of this incident at the next GSC meeting, Group Leaders and the Department will be informed of the incident at the next Department Meeting.

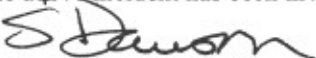
The Safety and Training Office will address ergonomic issues and office work in a re-evaluation of the Office Work JRA.

There was some concern that people who are injured may not report it and/or will continue working in pain so as to 'not set the tote boards back to zero'. The Department will address this issue at the next Department meeting.

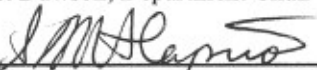
Lessons Learned:

Custom made desks are specifically designed for an individual. Other persons that move into the 'custom' space may not be suited to the furniture. It is the supervisor's responsibility to evaluate the condition and ensure that modifications are made if deemed necessary. Ergonomic problems should be corrected before injuries occur.

The above incident has been investigated and requires no further action.


S. Dawson, Department Chair

1/10/06
Date


S. M. Shapiro, ES&H Committee Chair

1/9/06
Date